

ing to PEACE times. Who these domestic enemies are we need not guess very long.

The Governor was also authorized to take a census of the military resources of the State. What the Governor has done in exercising that authority, the people of this State have by this time learned to their sorrow. Not only has the Governor been guided by the constitutional provisions and limitations, whereby the able-bodied male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five are required to render military service to the State, but he has gone far beyond that. By his proclamation issued on June 6th, he required all these and children from sixteen years up and men up to fifty-one years and all the women to be registered as part of the military resources of the State, under penalty of six months' imprisonment for failure to do so.

One of the military bills of this year and one of the very worst of them did NOT become a law chiefly because of the presence in the Assembly of the two Socialists.

This law as proposed would have required all the young men of the State between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three to take compulsory military training for a period of five years for sliding terms each year, i. e., for six months during the first year, four months during the second year, etc., until it should be one month for the last and fifth year. The State was to pay just the railroad fare and the board and food for these boys during their periods of training and to furnish them with the necessary equipment. The bill expressly stated that no wages or compensation should be paid for time lost.

Contrary to the usual procedure of having public hearings upon all important bills, the committee on military affairs intended to have no hearing on this bill. The Socialist Assemblymen, however, discovered that on a certain day the committee was to consider this bill and procured the State office to send Comrade Beardsley to Albany, and the two members of the House with his assistance were the only ones to appear before the committee to oppose that bill. No one appeared for it.

It would occupy too much space to relate here all the arguments that the Socialists advanced against the bill. Suffice it to

say that the Socialists laid before the committee all the arguments that the Socialist movement has against militarism. But those were not the arguments that moved the committee to pigeon-hole the bill. In the course of the argument, not that it was the one which appealed to the Socialists particularly, but because we thought that it might accomplish the purpose which we sought, the huge expense to the State of New York and to the industries of the State which this law would entail was emphasized before the military committee. Great stress was laid about the tens of millions of dollars that it would cost the "poor taxpayers" of the State, curiously enough, about which phase of the question the chairman of the committee said he had never thought before.

Within a day or two after the hearing, a short news item appeared in the Albany papers, in a very inconspicuous part, to be sure, announcing that the military committee killed this bill, because they found that it would be too costly and too expensive for the State of New York to have it made into law. Evidently, the "patriots" of the military committee, who were ready to send the youth of this State and land to be maimed and crippled, or even killed, thought more of the dollars of the wealthy of the State, than of the lives of the sons of the working class.

On January 3rd, when we convened, there were a certain number of labor laws on the Statute books of the State. To be sure, they were not all that they should be. But they were some safeguard, some protection to the lives and limbs of the workers. On May 11th, when the Legislature adjourned, there was not a man who could tell which of these labor laws, so far as the Legislature was concerned, are still in existence. The Legislature, by passing an omnibus bill, introduced by Senator Brown, the majority leader of the Senate and one of the attorneys for the New York Central Railroad Company, empowered the Industrial Commission to suspend any and all of the labor laws, without distinction whatever, during the period of the war and for two months thereafter—for good measure. A bill previously passed this year practically gave every inspector and every inconsequential employee of the Industrial Commission power and discretion to act for that Commission. What would have happened to the laboring masses if this had actually become law, no one can foretell.